Training to Afghanistan pilots

5959. SHRI J. S. RAJU: Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION AND TOURISM be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government of Afghanistan have requested the Government of India to import training to their pilots;

(b) if so, whether the Government of India have accepted to the request; and

(c) if so, the conditions and period of training and by when the training is likely to be imparted?

THE MINISTER OF CIVIL AVIATION AND TOURISM (SHRI GHULAM NABI AZAD): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) and (c) The Government of Afghanistan have been assured that the request would be considered keeping in view requirement of our students and availability of aircraft at Indira Gandhi Rashtriya Uran Akademi.

Construction of Airport at Pune

5960. SHRI SATISH PRADHAN: Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION AND TOURISM be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have approved a special project of constructing Airport at Pune in Maharashtra, to facilitate export of avricultural produce; and

(b) whether Government have any proposal for creating separate Airports for speedy export of agricultural products; if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF CIVIL AVIATION AND TOURISM (SHRI GHULAM NABI AZAD): (a) and (b) No, Sir.

Shifting of location of International Airport project at Bangalore

5961. SHRI K. RAHMAN KHAN: Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION AND TOURISM be pleased to state:

(a) whether the location of the International Airport project at Bangalore which is being constructed in the private sector near Devanahalli is being shifted to Mysore Road;

(b) if so, the reason for such a decision; and

(c) if not, at what stage the project stands?

THE MINISTER OF CIVIL AVIATION AND TOURISM (SHRI GHULAM NABI AZAD): (a) No, Sir.

(b) Does not arise.

(c) Karnataka Government have selected a consortium led by TATA Industries to undertake construction of the project on build-own-operate basis. Airports Authority of India will provide technical assistance.

Excise Duty on Woollen Export

5962. SHRI KRISHAN LAL SHARMA: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that since 1980 under the DEEC Scheme the export of Knitwears and shawls went up; if so, to what extent;

(b) whether it is a fact that after imposition of excise duty in 1994-95 budget, out of 20 lakhs pieces quota allotted to the wool and woolen Eqport Promotion Council, only 12 lakh pieces could be utilised as against 20 lakh pieces in 1993-94;

(c) whether it is also a fact that the excise duty was imposed in February, 1994 but the drawback rate was announced on the 8th December, 1994 with the result that the units which paid excise duty have not been able to claim its refund till date; and

(d) whether it is also a fact that instead of finding solution of excise duty during 1994-95 now the additional counter vailing duty has been imposed which was exempted earlier under the Duty Exemption Scheme?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI M. V. CHANDRASHEKARA MURTHY): (a) No separate data on export of Knitwears and shawls under DEEC Scheme is maintained.

(b) Out of Reserved quota of 20 lakhs pieces for the year 1994, quota to the extent of 11,88,203 pieces only could be utilised. No clear linkage, however, can be established between lower utilisation of quota and imposition of excise duty in 1994-95 budget.

(c) Yes, Sir: excise duty on knitting and hosiery yarn was imposed with effect from 1.3.1994. The All Industry Drawback rate relating to knitwears and shawls were increased with effect from 1-6-1994 taking this duty into consideration. However, as a special export promotion measure, a reduced All-Industry rate was also introduced with effect from 8-12-94 to exports under Duty Exemption Scheme. Further, exporters already using duty paid yarn, could always file an application for fixation of special brand rate to compensate them for the duty incidence on yarn and other inputs used by them.

(d) Additional Customs duty on goods imported under Duty Exemption Scheme has been imposed with effect from 31.3.95 in respect of Advance Licences issued on or after 1-4-1995. This has been imposed with a view to remove procedural difficulties arising from verification and quantification of Modvat Credit taken on inputs used in export goods. The additional customs duty paid on inputs can be reclaimed by way of Modvat or Duty Drawback as per the rules.

Removal of UTI Officials

5963. SHRI O. P. KOHLI: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether some of the UTI officials have been removed|reshuffled;

(b) if so, the reasons therefor;

(c) whether an audit of UTI's operations was coaducted receetly;

(d) if so; the outcome thereof;

(e) whether the attention of Government has been drawn to the news-item captioned "Audit team probing officials' actions on Reliance Petrol" appearing in the Economic Times dated 22nd April, 1995;

(f) if so, the details thereof. and

(g) the action taken by Government thereon?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI M. V. CHANDRASHEKARA MURTHY): (a) and (b) Unit Trust of India have reported that some of their officials have been transferred as a part of normal organisational changes. No official has been removed from the services of the Trust in the recent past.

(c) In January, 1995, the audit firm of M|s Chitale & Co. were requested by the UTI to conduct a detailed reivew of policies, procedures and practices of the Trust and make suggestions in respect of UTIs operations relating to investments and investor service.

(d) The information is being collected and will be laid on the Table of the House.

(e) Yes, Sir.